

**REMARKS**

By this Amendment the specification has been amended to further improve its presentation, claim 1 has been revised to better define the invention, and claims 2-6 have been amended to better depend from claim 1. Entry is requested.

In the outstanding final Office Action the examiner has rejected claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 00/55567.

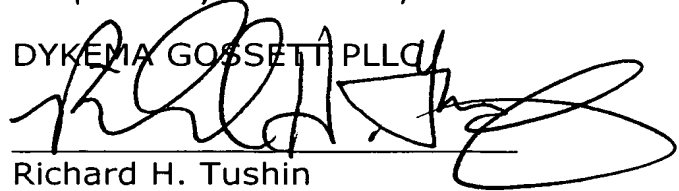
The applicants again assert that this rejection is incorrect relative to the amended claims. In this regard, claim 1 has been amended to define the joining metallic intermediate layer as consisting of a metal selected from the group consisting of steel and a nickel alloy ... which excludes a metallic layer that contains a significant amount of added gas bubbles to provide the porous metal layer described in WO 00/55567.

Favorable reconsideration is now requested.

Respectfully submitted,

DYKEMA GOSSETT PLLC

By:

  
Richard H. Tushin  
Registration No. 27,297  
Franklin Square, Third Floor West  
1300 I Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005-3353  
(202) 906-8680